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HOSPITAL AND TRAINING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

IN CHARGE OF
ALICE SHEPARD GILMAN, R.N.

FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR SCHOOLS OF NURSING

By A. M. HILLIARD, R.N.

High standards for entrance to training schools for nurses are being urged by leaders of the profession; publicity is being put forth for the enlistment of larger numbers of young women for these schools; legislation is enacted into law which calls for better conditions; but what teaching facilities have these schools provided? What has been the preparation of their principals for administration and their instructors for teaching? We rarely find in charge of our schools a principal who is not conscientious and hard-working, but many have undertaken their responsibilities without conscious need of special preparation and not a few have had but little education beyond that of grammar school and their professional preparation, sometimes, has been confined to graduation from training schools where hospital equipment, clinical facilities and good teaching are equally absent. Of course such administrators can have no knowledge as to what constitutes a good course of instruction in a professional school, for it must be borne in mind that a training school for nurses is a professional school and this presupposes full secondary (high school) preparation. It is obviously unsound to require that students shall have a better educational preparation for entrance to a nurse training school than the principal of the school and her assistants have had.

It by no means follows that training school committees take the same intelligent interest in schools of nursing that the same individuals would take in other educational institutions for which they might be responsible. Until the trustees and boards of managers of hospitals insist that the training school shall be conducted in such an educational manner as to strongly attract their own daughters, they cannot expect these schools to graduate the nurse who is now demanded in all the avenues of health education. No school is bigger or more progressive than its head, and the principal of a nurse training school should be as carefully selected for her personal and professional qualifications as is the principal of any other girls' school.

If the proper appointment is made for the principal of a school of nursing and she be given the same financial and professional support that would be unquestionably accorded the principal of any other educational institution, it would quite naturally follow that she would appoint on her faculty, nurses with the necessary professional preparation for teaching the theory and for the supervision of the practice work in nursing. If the standard curriculum is to serve as a guide for teaching in the average school of nursing, it is absolutely necessary that the instructor's preparation should enable her to correlate both the theory and practice of nursing.

In view of this fact, it is interesting to see that a recent advertisement for an instructor brought forth replies that were misspelled, badly expressed, and that offered as a basis for future work, positions held for a short time as head nurses or supervisors.

It would seem to us that if our schools were on the proper educational basis it would be quite impossible for any of these nurses for a moment to entertain the thought that she would be competent to fill such a position. In all probability not one of them has been taught by a properly prepared instructor or has been given more than a very superficial and inadequate course in nursing and is therefore wholly ignorant of the teaching to which student nurses are entitled.

In New York State, the Nurse Practice Act was framed to regulate by inspection the conditions existing in hospitals that conduct Registered Nurse Training Schools. Inspectors have been appointed by Civil Service examination and are under the direction of the State Department of Education, but up to the present time they have been limited in their activities by volume of work, lack of sufficient numbers, and by inadequate clerical assistance.

The last legislation enacted provides for more extensive inspection and for better classification of schools and it is hoped that through careful supervision of the schools by a corps of competent inspectors, the educational importance of the school of nursing may be brought before boards of trustees of hospitals and in this way some of the existing conditions which are so detrimental to the maintenance of proper standards be remedied. Hospitals which ignore the necessity for professional education and fail to consider the welfare of the student nurse should not be allowed the privilege of exploiting her. The establishment and maintenance of professional standards in nurse training schools will come only through their regulation by the highest educational authorities, the Department of Education and the Regents of the State University.

This regulation will eventually make impossible the appointment

as principal, instructor, or supervisor in nurse training schools of any nurse not qualified to hold such positions.

When the public comes to recognize the fact that a nurse training school is an institution with the same requirements and standards as the college or professional school, there will be no lack of applicants.

It is proved by the experience of all other professional schools that the higher the entrance requirements, the more distinguished the faculty and the more comprehensive and complete the course of instruction, the more certain it is that the school will be sought by students rather than obliged to seek them.

"MOTHER AND CHILD"

This is the title of a new magazine, the initial number appearing in June, of the American Child Hygiene Association. It is intended for doctors, nurses, or social workers who are interested in better health of babies and, therefore, of mothers. It is the official organ of the association and the subscription price is included in the dues; it may, however, be subscribed for by those not members. The June number is an attractive one in both appearance and contents; its forty-eight pages contain articles on various topics relating to the health of children from the pre-natal work on. The annual meeting of the Association will be held in St. Louis, October 11-13. Its headquarters are at 1211 Cathedral Street, Baltimore.

The National Child Welfare Association, headquarters at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, announces that it has a series of panels illustrating the lessons which nurses and social workers are trying to impress upon those who care for children. They may be used to illustrate talks, to ornament the walls of offices or public places, for class work with children, etc. Inquiries as to subjects should be made directly to the Association.

TOO LATE FOR CLASSIFICATION

Illinois.—THE WOMAN'S BOARD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL, Chicago, is offering three scholarships, of \$300 each, to young women who wish to study nursing preparatory to doing home or foreign mission work.

Maryland.—THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF NURSES will hold an examination for state registration during the first week in October. All applications must be filed with the secretary before the 20th day of September. Mary Cary Packard, secretary, 1211 Cathedral Street, Baltimore.